

COLONEL ORMSBY;

OR THE

GENUINE HISTORY

OF AN

IRISH NOBLEMAN,

IN THE FRENCH SERVICE.

——— Souls are for social blifs design'd:

Give me a blessing fit to match my mind,

A kindred soul, to double, and to share my joys.

DR. WATTS:

V O L. II.

L O N D O N:

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COLONEL ORMSBY.

LETTER XLIV.

Lady Beaumont to Colonel Ormsby.

AM I awake, or do I dream? I open my eyes, which are blinded with my tears; I shut them again with horror. I would hide myself from the light; it shews me my dishonour, or rather your eternal disgrace. Your name I will blot from my memory—I will not know that such a monster

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B,

exists;

exists : for my misfortune has been to have seen you, and now to hate you as my odious seductor. What ! did I so far debase myself as to love so contemptible a character, and to avow it also ? I thought you worthy of my heart ; my error has made me miserable. Enjoy, barbarous man, my tears, my shame, and my despair. Thank God, I am still uncontaminated ; my virtue is still sacred ; and in the midst of your transports I have preserved my honour. Farewell for ever ! The place where you inhabit is become profaned ; your presence insupportable. I will search after an asylum where you are not known—where I shall never hear your hated name again. In that solitude I hope to regain my lost tranquillity

lity—what do I say! Oh, no; I have lost it for ever—Yes, for ever! there have I doomed myself to deplore my cruel fate; for I insist upon breaking off all correspondence with a man of your principles: I will no longer read the subtle poison of your letters. You have opened my eyes; you have rendered me back my heart; my resentment subsides; my love expires—I feel myself more composed—I feel I can pardon you.

The Answer.

YOU have found out, my Lady, the cruel secret of adding horror to my distressed situation. I had indeed endeavoured to arm myself against your just but bitter reproaches; you are calm; your tranquillity, your frozen pardon, are such refinements of vengeance, as to strike me dumb with shame and remorse. You will hate me, Lady Beaumont? Oh, no; you cannot hate the man who adores you. The delirium of the senses is not a vice of the heart. I solemnly protest, I had no idea of injuring your virtue—I knew
not

not the danger I was running. Thus situated as I was, what mortal could be insensible to such a blaze of charms.— I saw them, and I lost my reason. O sole arbiter of my life, supreme judge of my intentions, pardon a transport that my heart abjures. If my much-injured Lady Beaumont will but deign to admit me once more into her presence, she will see to what a miserable state I am reduced by the consciousness of my offence. Do not, do not, matchless Perfection, think of bidding me an eternal adieu! Let me conjure you to reflect on the dreadful consequences—My passion will have no bounds—my despair will hurry me into perdition. The very thought distracts me—I know not where I am—I shud-

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der—I weep—I fear every thing—My God! is there a desert, a savage shore or uninhabited cavern, to which I would not follow you? After the crime my passions have committed, they will brave every obstacle. Have mercy, heaven!—I am misery-struck. My once fond and tender Eloisa has forbidden me to write—perhaps she will not answer my letter! the idea kills me—a world of terrors have seiz'd upon my soul—Oh! Adieu! Adieu!

L E T.

LETTER XLV.

Mr. Neville to Colonel Ormsby.

S I R,

THIS my request that you never write to me again. I will have nothing to do with the man who is dead to virtue, to honour, and to sentiment. Once I thought you superior to most men—'twas, I find, but a chimera. Although you did not follow my advice, you seemed to be sensible of its propriety; and I was tempted to overlook the errors of your conduct, in consideration of the excess of your

B 4

passion,

passion, and the delicacy of your sentiments. If love be not more pure, more noble, more disinterested in you, than in the herd of men, I have the same idea of your friendship. You have insulted the most respectable character in the world; you have destroyed her wonted tranquillity; you have shut your heart to love and friendship. Is this your boasted heroism! O my once virtuous young friend! Remember, I have often warned you of the rocks against which your unruly passions would toss you. What dæmon could tempt you to single out Lady Beaumont, for the sport and victim of your licentious desires! You had no intention to injure her innocence! Admirable apology! Had you succeeded
in

in your attempt, I would not have condescended to shew you the infamy of such a conduct. I would have consigned your name to oblivion. Never was I an inflexible moralist; but I am inexorable against those shameful vices, which attack the happiness, the honour, reputation, or probity, of one we ought to respect and esteem. Where can I find expressions to paint your feelings, when you reflect on the divine creature you have rendered so unhappy? One word more, and then farewell. If my manner of reprehension displeases, I pronounce you a lost man. Recall to your memory, Sir, the long and tender intimacy I have enjoyed in your family; the last dying words of a father, who conjured me to extend my friend-

ship to his only son. You know, I have religiously performed his request. I have taken upon me to direct and inspect the whole course of your education, and I have not neglected to cultivate your heart as well as your head. The progress you made in your studies gave me a sensible pleasure ; your manner of thinking made me esteem and love. Will you then turn out an ingrate, and force me to give you up to a world of miseries, which are the sure attendants of vice and folly ? Unhappy youth ! Farewell !

LET.

LETTER XLVI.

Colonel Ormsby to Mr. Neville.

I Candidly acknowledged my crime. I could not conceal it from the man I so honoured, and so sincerely respected: but your manner, my dear Sir, has increased the misery of my situation. I am truly sensible I merit the severest reprehension; especially from the friend of my own heart—a heart now racked with a thousand tortures. 'Tis impossible I can survive my disgrace. Nothing to hope! nothing to expect! The position kills me. Lady

Beaumont will never write to me again; she even refuses to read my letters. For heaven's sake, do not expect in me a fortitude to bear up against such accumulated misfortunes. What is this dreadful crime that I have committed? I have yielded to the impulse of love, to the delirium, to the sweetest penchant of which nature is susceptible. Had you been in my place, you would have been the victim of your feelings: for all that is seductive in beauty caught hold of my senses—I then thought I heard her call me—her attitude displayed such a profusion of charms—were a celestial being to have seen her thus, he would have renounced the perfection of his nature for the pleasure
of

of being culpable—O what have I said!---I have lost my reason---I can never more see the adored Eloisa---I am irreparably lost to myself, to her, to my friends, and to the whole world.

LET.

L E T T E R XLVII.

Lady Beaumont to her Uncle.

MY protector, my friend, my more than father, do not be uneasy at the afflictions of your niece. I am going to my country-house; and I shall be many miles on the road before you receive this intimation. I feared to meet your representations, your intreaties; I feared the ascendant you have over me to fly your presence. My soul is a prey to melancholy; I sigh after solitude and the rocks of * * *. 'Tis there I seek for a balm to cure my wounded

wounded sensibility. I renounce every thing in life except that of loving the best and most affectionate of relations: to you I confide the secret of my retreat—love me---I still merit your affection----My throbbing bosom----my sighs---my tears will only permit me to subscribe myself

Your affectionate Niece,

BEAUMONT,

LET:

LETTER XLVIII.

Colonel Ormsby to Madame St. Alban.

MADAM,

AS you are the most intimate friend of Lady Beaumont, I write to implore your kind offices in my behalf; and that you would favour me with her address. 'Tis unnecessary to conceal from you, madam, to what excess I adore that divine woman. She has abruptly left her uncle, and every soul is ignorant of the place to which she is retreated. I wander about like one distracted---my inquiries are fruitless.

You

You are, I know, the *confidante* of this unhappy lady. To your sensibility I address myself, that you may restore me to my senses. I shall be a martyr to my distraction ; have pity on the poignant agonies which I eternally suffer : and rest assured, that to my last moments I shall retain a grateful remembrance of such a favour.

The

The Answer.

SIR,

YOUR letter has thrown me into the greatest affliction; I am equally uneasy, and even terrified. Lady Beaumont is the most intimate friend I have upon earth; I know her great virtues so well, that I would give my life to render her any essential proofs of my affection. What can this mean? what could induce her to leave the house of her uncle, without writing me a single line! My God! if you, Sir,
have

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have been the cause, I shall certainly hate you. If you can obtain any intelligence, you will not fail transmitting it by the first post. I shall be wofully miserable, till I can trace her present residence,

I am, &c.

ST. ALBAN.

LET-

L E T T E R XLIX.

Lady Beaumont to Madame St. Alban.

*Cafle de * * *.*

HOW can I possibly delineate, my dear friend, what I would hide even from my ownself! I am totally at a loss to find expressions to describe his perfidy. I no longer esteem the traitor. Know, my dear St. Alban, that I am the most unfortunate creature breathing. The idol which my heart had set up; the idol which I adored; the idol I believed to have been a god, is no other than a vile seducer. He would have

have imposed upon my credulity; he would have availed himself of my sleep! I who relied on the purity of his sentiments, what imprudence! This has destroyed all my schemes of future happiness---my passion is extinguished. A mortal despair remains. Every thing around me appears frightfully dismal---I will blot his name from my memory; and I conjure you never to name that such a wretch exists. 'Tis all over---I am determined never to see him more. The remains of my miserable existence I have doomed to this retreat, where I am cut off from my Uncle and my dearest St. Alban. The neighbouring chain of mountains are scarce sufficient to hide me from his sight; his cruel image haunts me
day

day and night. Is it thus one hates ?
Have you seen him ? Has he written to
you ? In mercy to my feelings, do not
let him know where I train on a most
deplorable existence. Reflect on the
importance of the secret I have lodged
in your bosom ; and write immediately
to the distressed

ELOISA BEAUMONT.

The

The Answer.

MY joy was inexpressible in recognizing the character of my truly amiable friend; but how was I grieved as soon as I had read the contents of your letter! My Eloisa two hundred miles from her friends! Would to heaven I could fly to your retreat, and give you all the consolations of a sincere and cordial friendship. I hate that Colonel Ormsby, since I know the horrid mischiefs he has occasioned. Dear Eloisa, you still see him with other eyes, notwithstanding your positive declarations: for I read in every line, that you detest the crime, but adore the criminal.

criminal. Your reproaches come from a heart still alive to passion; and the image of the seducer will haunt you 'till you have pardoned him, and restored him to favour. Do you think to recover your lost tranquillity by absence and solitude? No, the contrary will be the result; and I fear a cruel world will put a wrong construction on the motives of your leaving the capital. You are now an unhappy being, wandering among the mountains and craggy rocks which will re-echo back your sighs and complaints; and yet you think this will fortify you against the seductions of a tender passion? How miserably are you mistaken in your measures! my dear Eloisa. Such a solitude serves but to augment, rather than

than to diminish the wants of the heart : with your friends and the world, you would at times forget your feelings, and their counsels would give you courage. Where you are, all is silent ; but your too susceptible bosom, which will be ever at variance with your understanding. If these reasons cannot convince you of the necessity to quit your painful situation ; can you resist against the earnest intreaties of an uncle, who has been melancholy ever since your departure ? He calls upon me to explain the mystery which drove you from his house. I know not what to say or do. You know he is intitled to every consideration ; and if you do not return, you will rob him of his happiness. You are, my dear Eloisa, young, hand-

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some, and virtuous ; you know these are dangerous qualities for the spirit of detraction and calumny : again, therefore, let me conjure you to return to your friends, and bid adieu to so melancholy a habitation. God bless you ! I thought it impossible to love you better, but your misfortunes have made me feel an increase of tenderness.

Your's,

ST. ALBAN.

LET-

LETTER L.

Colonel Ormsby to Mr. Neville.

LADY Beaumont has left us---She has carried my soul along with her, and I feel that I only exist by the consciousness of my extreme wretchedness. My future happiness is fled, without the hopes of a return. She is gone!--not a creature knows whither! Ah! my much injured friend, when I received this dreadful news, I thought my heart was pierced with a hundred poinards at the same instant; I seemed to anticipate all the horrors of an ap-

C 2 proaching

proaching dissolution---my blood was frozen, my reason lost---I remained aghast and petrified. If my friend knows where Lady Beaumont is, and conceals it from me, adieu to friendship---Adieu to the whole world! for my soul cannot sustain such a load of accumulated doubts, pangs, and sorrows!

LET-

L E T T E R L I.

Lady Beaumont to Madame St. Alban.

YOU will break my heart, my dear St. Alban. Your pressing solicitations distract me. I cannot bear the thoughts of refusing you any thing; and yet I dare not expose myself to the danger of seeing the man who has been the god of my idolatry. Alas! I can no longer hate him; guilty as he is, I still find I adore him. My unfortunate passion condemns me to this sad habitation. Here I can indulge my tears, my wanderings, his crime, my

uncle, and my St. Alban. Nothing can be more calamitous than my present situation ; each hour, each instant, serves but to redouble its fatal poignancy—a letter perhaps from my uncle—Oh heavens ! he is fallen dangerously ill. I fly to give him all the succour I can. Oh should I on my arrival not find him alive, I will not survive him another hour !

LET-

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LETTER LII.

Mr. Neville to Colonel Ormsby.

UNHAPPY young man! guilty as you are, I must feel for the misfortunes you have brought upon yourself, as well as upon that angelic woman Lady Beaumont. You have indeed your own turbulent desires to blame; but this consideration will not alleviate your pains. I am exceedingly affected at both your situations. Lady Beaumont has then, I find, positively left you to deplore and repent

at leisure the insult you have offered to her virtue. Good God! into what a bosom have you thrown pain and desolation! It is not my intention to add more weight to your misery—I have an idea—but beware you do not abuse my confidence: if you do, I will never see or write to you while I live. My secret is, that I suspect this model of virtue and perfection is gone to an estate of her's at ****. It is a lonesome solitary retreat, wonderfully calculated for a soul abandoned to despair and melancholy. In the name of sacred friendship, make no improper use of this conjecture; the least indiscretion, dishonourable for Lady Beaumont and you, will lose her

her for ever. Call up all your philosophy, at least that part of it which consists in a manly and intrepid courage.

LETTER LIII.

The Countess Dubois to Colonel Ormsby.

WHAT in the name of fortune were you doing, my friend, in the wood of ***? you were seen walking with hasty strides—you appeared in the last disorder—your hair dishevelled—a gesture which shewed a mind terribly agitated—a look which indicated your being deprived of your senses. The moment I caught your eye, you disappeared in an instant; as if the sight of a woman was become your mortal antipathy. Upon my honour, Ormsby, you wonderfully

derfully personated a certain *melancholy Prince*, who figures in some romance which I have read. You were very little more rational than Roland, who tore up trees by their roots, because his mistress had deceived him: or, if you like it better, I compare you to Don Quixote in the Black Forest. You only wanted a milk-white palfrey to mount, in order to deliver a captive princess from the enchantments of some hideous giant. Seriously, when once we are disposed to play the fool, we ought to run such lengths as these, because they must please the hero, and divert all his friends, neighbours, and the regions where he exhibits such mighty deeds of high renown. Lady Beau-

mont will laugh immoderately at all those wondrous flights; she has robbed poor Colonel Ormsby of his reason, his person, and his graces. Wonderful! why you are become a downright St. Preux. To complete the farce, and to be in the *Coutume*, she is become the inhabitant of some deserted island. Raillery apart; what could induce her Ladyship to abandon the handsome, young, and all-accomplished Ormsby? I am dying to know the whole history. Adieu!

LET-

LETTER LIV.

Lady Beaumont to Madame St. Alban.

YESTERDAY evening I reached my uncle's. I begin to revive. He is something better. I embraced him for a quarter of an hour, before I could utter a single syllable. He received me with his usual gracious manner. For that moment, I felt my heart alive to joy. Tomorrow I will contrive to see you. That circumstance will procure me some more moments of felicity. Adieu.

Billet

Billet from Colonel Ormsby,

To Madame St. Alban.

FOR heaven's sake — for the sake of the most unfortunate man breathing, deign to tell me if the report be true, that Lady Beaumont is returned to her uncle's. I dare not write to her; I dare not pay her a visit. I am obliged to have recourse to your kind offices. In compassion to my sufferings, and the emaciated state of my health, permit me to live. Let me conjure you to write one line in my behalf; for,

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for, without you, I have not the
most distant hope. With a trembling
and mortal anxiety, I wait your an-
swer,

And am,

Dear Madam, &c.

ORMSBY.

The

The Answer.

S I R,

LADY Beaumont was here when I had the honour of receiving your billet ; she immediately knew the hand-writing, and fell that moment lifeless in my arms. As soon as she was a little recovered, she forbade my mentioning your name, and I dare not disobey her at this juncture. I beg you will not write to her ; if you do, you will have only yourself to blame. I am very much induced to render you all the services in my power, because I am
tempted

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tempted to believe that you are a gentleman of the strictest honour, notwithstanding your recent outrage against the best and most amiable of women.

LET.

LETTER LV.

Lady Beaumont to Madame St. Alban.

AH! my dear friend! I shall certainly fall a martyr to my feelings. What! cannot I even see his hand-writing without losing my senses! Good God! I love him more than ever! Those places where I have so frequently seen him at my feet—this chamber, witness of his temerity and submission—this garden, which I have traversed full of his tenderness and superior qualities—---every thing about me retraces his dear image
 ---every

—every thing invites me to love him even with an increase of ardour. I have had the madness to put the following plaintive verses to music, because they contain a sentiment too applicable to my present feelings.

Senta le mie querele
 Il nume Dio d'amore,
 Poi renda à questo cuore
 Il ben' che lo tradì.

Yesterday as I was talking to my uncle by his bedside, he accidentally mentioned Colonel Ormsby, who he said had shewn him such marks of attention, that he should never forget them. He also mentioned his having called twice every day to learn
 the

the state of his health ; and that when he was found to be in danger, he was seen to return home with tears in his eyes. Had my uncle at that instant seen me, he would have discovered my sensibility : I left him abruptly, and wept in all the luxury of woe.

This God-like man little thought of the impression he had made upon my poor distracted mind ; he was ignorant, St. Alban, that the man who had so interested himself in his recovery, was the god I had chosen to worship ; and that his tenderness for me extended to every thing about me. They say his features are very much altered—are those charming ones, so deeply graven upon my heart, injured by grief and vexation ?

vexation? Am I not the cause? Can I then hesitate to pardon him—to see him? Yet he has not even written me a single line; I have not had a glimpse of him since my return home. Ah, without doubt he fears I shall send back his letters; he fears he shall still offend --- Yet I accuse him in an instance which proves the delicacy of his attachment.

O, my St. Alban, what charming news! I have this moment a letter that informs me the place of * * * is conferred on Colonel Ormsby. He knows nothing of the interest I have taken in this affair with the marshal; and as I am not known, I have a double satisfaction in the success of my application.

tion. Adieu ; I will write directly to my honourable friend, to thank him : he little dreams what a world of happiness he has been instrumental in procuring to the almost heart-broken

ELOISA BEAUMONT.

LET-

LETTER LVI.

Colonel Ormsby to Lady Beaumont.

GRACIOUS Providence! add to the faculties of my soul, and furnish me with expressions worthy of my transports; and, by inspiring me, be the organ of my thanks and gratitude. This hour, this halcyon hour is become the happiest of my life. My Eloisa has deigned to seal my pardon—I am wild with joy—I efface the words as they flow from my pen with tears of gladness. Is it then to Lady Beaumont that I am indebted for my recent appointment!

pointment! Though banished her presence, her heart has pleaded powerfully and victoriously in my favour. O deign, divine woman, to restore me to your former esteem, as well as your affection; and permit me to fall prostrate at your feet, to implore an everlasting oblivion of a fault that can never be repeated a second time. Grant this, and Ormsby will be the most envied of mortals!

Billet

Billet of Answer.

S I R,

AT last I have brought myself to the resolution of seeing you again; but I expect you bring with you my friend St. Alban: and I impose positive silence upon the chapter of thanks and gratitude.

L E T T E R L V I I .

Colonel Ormsby to Lady B.

WHAT an affecting scene! the impression can never escape my memory; and these following words have sunk deep into my soul:

“ Colonel Ormsby, I forgive you ;
“ this is as much as to say, I love
“ you: yes, I do love you; and I
“ here renew the avowal in the pre-
“ fence

“ fence of our friend : but I expect
 “ you now solemnly promise not to
 “ oppose my sentiments respecting my
 “ forced engagements to the man
 “ whose name I am doom’d to bear.
 “ St. Alban will be the witness be-
 “ tween us ; your honour shall be the
 “ seal, and my love the recompence :
 “ remember, therefore, that your sure-
 “ ties are honour, love, and friend-
 “ ship.”

Yes, my adorable mistress, I have
 sworn to observe religiously all your in-
 junctions : henceforward I adopt your
 affections, your tastes, and your senti-
 ments. For the last time, however,

let us mutually deplore the misfortune of two beings, united by the laws of nature, and yet separated by the laws of the land. With what truth and delicacy has Guarini described my present situation !

S'el peccar' è sì dolce,
 E'l non peccar sì necessario ; o troppo
 Imperfetta natura,
 Che repugni à la Legge ;
 O troppo dura Legge ;
 Che la natura offendi.

These lines are so happily transfused into your own language, that I must here cite them.

Si

Si l'instinct et la loi, par des effets contraires,
 Ont également attaché
 L'un tant de douceur au péché,
 L'autre des peines si sévères ;
 Sans doute, ou la Nature est imparfaite en soi
 Qui nous donne un penchant que condamne la Loi ;
 Ou la loi doit passer pour une loi trop dure,
 Qui condamne un penchant que donne la Nature.

Have we not reason, dear Eloisa, to lament this tyranny of prejudice ! to us it has been an inexhaustible source of tears—but enough. I will draw the curtain before the picture it has exhibited : for I have read my pardon in your eyes ; joy is brightened up in mine ; the pain is far removed, when felicity begins. I now forget all my sorrows.

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Feeling

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Feeling souls have this superior privilege over others, that if they are made to feel excruciating pangs, they have a source of refined and ecstatic pleasures of which the vulgar can have not the least conception. These are your own sentiments. Adieu! I must and shall adore you for ever.

LET-

LETTER LVIII.

Lady Beaumont to Colonel Ormsby.

SINCE I am thoroughly persuaded of the purity with which you love me, I cannot resist the pleasure of pouring out my whole soul to my once more dearly beloved Ormsby.

Caro adorato bene,
Sole degl' occhi miei
Tu solo solo sei
Cuore di questo cuor',
Tu mia speranza.

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I promised to write the artless effusions of my heart; and you see that I am well disposed to keep my word. I find indeed such a restraint in writing any other language, that I am almost tempted to adopt no other in future: for I cannot express the ineffable pleasure I receive in these tender assurances of a pure and delicate affection. With what joy do I receive and read your passionate letters! 'Tis impossible to tell you how welcome they are to my too susceptible heart. What delicious entertainment for a truly enamoured soul! Divine unison of minds! by which alone a permanent happiness can be insured! I paint to my fond imagination Colonel Ormsby, with my letter

ter in his hands---I see his matchless
tendernefs and fenfibility---I fee---but
where am I wandering to? Adieu!
Your Eloifa bids you to be happy.

The Answer.

DE A R Eloisa Beaumont! were it possible to describe my feelings, you would never cease loving the most passionate of lovers. Oh, that I had the pen of a Rousseau, I would then, as the poet expresses it, give you thoughts which breathe, and words which burn. I would pourtray in the most glowing colours the ardour of this divine passion: nature and love should again live in written characters: or, in other words, to this second Raphael I would be a second Corregio, whose masterly talent was, to delineate his vast conceptions

tions with grace, truth, and harmony : and with such a pencil I would picture my affections as he did his angels, who were crayoned in splendour, pellucid in glory, and breathing the animated tint of celestials.

With your never-to-be-forgotten gracious epistle, I have your striking and consequently invaluable portrait. I stare it into animation : my sensibility cherishes the illusion ; I hear your dear accents ; my intoxicated imagination hurries my enraptured soul into new scenes of love, wonder, and delight.

I am just returned from Orpheus and Eurydice. The music is wonderfully

D 6

melo-

melodious and expressive, while the position of the *Mari Fidele* inspired the most lively sensations. I saw myself and my Eloisa in every scene, which called up feelings for every passion--- feelings as did justice to such masters as Melastasio, and the *Chevalier* Gluck. Love, poetry, and music, are the delights of your Ormsby; no wonder then that his pen runs into a language which becomes jargon to ninety-nine in a hundred throughout the whole world. Adieu! lovely Eloisa! and remember your lover wants neither virtue, sentiment, or passion, to respect, esteem, and adore you.

L E T-

L E T T E R L I X.

Lady Beaumont to Colonel Ormsby.

DEAR possessor of my heart, what will become of my extreme infatuation? Each interview rivets my affections faster and faster. Fond man! what shall I, what can I do to render myself worthy such attachment? How flew the moments while in your company! I was in Elysium! I was---O Ormsby! my sensibility triumphs over my discretion---I must tear myself from
you---

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you---I blush in glancing over what I
have written---Adieu! I will persuade
myself I *do* love you.

ELOISA.

Billet

Billet from Colonel Ormsby,

To Lady Beaumont.

O My Eloisa! my eyes are swimming in tears of love and gratitude! My God! what a blessing do I not enjoy in being beloved by the woman I so honour, esteem, love, and adore! Delightful unison of souls! a pre-sentiment whispers we shall be yet happy. It will be the study of my life to make you so. I do not even wish to breathe but for your sake. This evening

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ing I shall again behold my elegant woman in all her irresistible charms and bewitching sensibility. 'Till then, Farewell!

LET-

LETTER LX.

Colonel Ormsby to Lady Beaumont.

THOU art, my Eloisa, the delight of my life; permit me to banish that formal word *you* too much respect frightens love. Let us speak and write but the language of our hearts. Passion, such as ours, will not submit to the trammels of modes and studied decorums. We will rise superior to vulgar prejudices: my Eloisa has nobly dar'd to write as she feels,
and

and she has made her lover the happiest of mortals. Ah! how ravishing to hear my charming mistress pronounce,

Caro del mio contento
Farfi più vive io sento.

Whence, O whence this sweet agitation, that I can scarce hold my pen? Whence this starting tear of joy! Whence this sudden palpitation of my heart? My fond imagination represents thee, my Eloisa, as the most enchanting and most affectionate of thy sex. Thou knowest thou art wondrous handsome —thou knowest thou art elegance itself —thou knowest thou possessest an uncommon

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common understanding, taste and address—and thou knowest, as such, I honour, love, and adore thee.

ORMSBY.

LET-

L E T T E R LXI.

Lady Beaumont to Colonel Ormsby.

FROM the most wretched of beings, I am become the most happy of mortals. The retrospect of what I have suffered, compared with my present feelings, make me doubly enjoy my feast of sentiment and love. Your delicacy, respect, and tenderness, have effaced all my past miseries; I am now alive to all the delights of a refined sensibility. I read your welcome *Billet-doux*, with the same warmth and emotion which you experience in penning them.

them. The assurances of your love are sweetly grateful; my Ormsby, thou hast all the softness of Petrarch, with all his passion! Adieu!

LET.

LETTER LXII.

Lady Beaumont to Colonel Ormsby.

TWO days are elapsed, and not a line to my Ormsby ! you will be angry, no doubt ; you will be more so, when I tell you I have been to visit a nun who has preached with *unction* against that terrible passion Love. 'Tis criminal, she says, to adore any man who is not *beatified*—I will not believe her, Ormsby. We are happy, and heaven is too just to be offended with a felicity like ours. My sensibility, which perhaps may become my future torment, is nevertheless more dear than life itself,
if

if it makes the charm of my Ormsby's.
This magic chafes away every melan-
choly idea, and turns my soul to love
and admiration.

Come alla riva
Ei spinge il legno,
All' altro segno
Dov' io men' volo,
Mi scorge solo
Il mio pensier.

Angels can bear me witness how I
love to meditate on your worth and ac-
complishments; what a heaven while
you continue all charming, all tender,
and all faithful! In spite of every dif-
ficulty which besets me, I love, and
Contenta io sono.

Billet

Billet from Lady Beaumont.

I Detest every thing which calls off the idea of my Ormsby. I could wish to annihilate from the rest of my days, those painful hours and days I pass without hearing or seeing you. Even a desert with the man I love, is preferable to the crowd of flatterers and sycophants, with whom you think I am so highly delighted. A-propos of a wilderness ; a certain gentleman alone in a box at the Opera, who did not think he was overheard, upon the scene shifting to a new one, he passionately exclaimed,

exclaimed, My dear mistress! would to heaven I was there with thee! Has not this mortal stolen this transport, this instance of his sensibility, from my Ormsby?

L E T T E R LXIII.

Colonel Ormsby to Lady Beaumont:

I AM this instant retired from company. 'Tis late; but late as it is, I cannot close my eyes before I have paid my adoration to my lovely image. 'Tis my Eloisa; to her I pour out my whole soul. Almighty love! how powerful, how fascinating are thy charms! How grateful, how voluptuous those tears, those sighs, and broken exclamations!

To-morrow I expect the arrival of a few friends; would to heaven my Eloisa
was

was of the party! We have, indeed, nothing but concerts, balls, *petits soupers*, and parties of pleasure. The carnival is begun, and all the world seems mad with noisy mirth, and an eternal round of masquerading. Happy period, however, for those who mask their faces, to speak the language of their hearts! The idea makes me melancholy. To be kept from my charming woman, is the privation of every thing under heaven. When I meditate on the bliss I should experience in seeing you here, the disappointment makes me more than half mad. O my dear Eloisa! what is it that makes me so ardently wish to see you? My heart has a thousand things to tell you; my pen cannot neither express them, or ar-

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range them in any order : they are better expressed by looks and gestures, than by the feeble aid of words and phrases. If the bare sight of your resemblance calls up such emotions, what must they not be, were I blessed with the sight of the divine original ? Adieu ! 'tis two in the morning—

LET-

LETTER LXIV.

Colonel Ormsby to Mr. Neville.

AFTER having pestered my dear friend with my sufferings, 'tis necessary I should inform him of my superlative happiness. You knew already of my fortunate reconciliation with Lady Beaumont; you knew also the cruel conditions which I have sworn to keep sacred. I have passively submitted to every thing. I obey, I suffer, yet I am the happiest of beings. There is a secret charm attached to this lively woman, which excites the most ardent

desires, and yet retains them in a subordination that is wonderful. A look from her can carry fire and disorder—my soul is in a flame—I can reason no longer—I clasp her in my arms—I am wild with joy,—yet one word, one glance checks my career, and compels me to behold her as something more than human. She appears so sensible to my raptures, my joy, my respect, and my fears of offending, that a tear will steal down her lovely cheek; she would hide it from me but in vain. Eloisa has an exquisite sensibility, but so refined with sentiment and delicacy, that her very transports wear the dignity of virtue. What is more enchanting in this world, than to behold a young beautiful woman, endowed with the
 most

most lively sensibility when she looks on the man she loves! Reverse the picture, and shew the adorable Lady Beaumont sacrificing her youth, charms, and feelings, to a tyrant who persecutes her, and to one she perfectly loaths and abhors! Be happy, my Neville; your friend tastes of a felicity which is not to be expressed.

LETTER LXV.

Lady Beaumont to Colonel Ormsby.

DEAR ORMSBY !

I Have this moment received a letter from my brother-in-law, which alarms me exceedingly. He requests to find me alone, and at home to-morrow evening. Good God ! what can he have to impart to me at this juncture ? I saw him very lately ; he then indeed appeared very much embarrassed—if it is upon the subject of his brother—perhaps he has some propositions

positions—it is a reconciliation!—Ah, rather—I would sooner suffer death, than be snatched from the arms of the man I love, to groan under the intolerable load of a repeated tyranny. I have been already too much his victim. I will shun him for ever. Neither prayers, threats, or promises, shall make me renounce the resolutions I have taken. With what aspect could I behold that barbarous man! I could not support his presence. Why did my filial duties silence my feelings, through the fear of offending my father? 'Twas this fatal error, this fear, this timidity of my tender age, which forced me to the altar, where, tremblingly, I was sworn to love him whom my heart detested. This discovery hurt

his pride, and has been the cause of all his cruelty. Sure of having no part in my affections, I became the sport of his brutality, violence, and gusts of passion. This savage tyrant has been as much the torment of my life, as thou hast been, my Ormsby, the charm; and since I love you, I dread his machinations. I respect him, however, too much to publish my misfortunes. Whatever may be the sentiments of the world, I will not justify myself at his expence; but I am determined never to live with him again. No, I will not quit the best of relations. This letter has filled my soul with melancholy; I even find myself attacked with a cruel fever. I forgot to mention, that I sus-
pect

pect he has had some secret conferences with my uncle. Thus circumstanced, I have great need of reposing my fears and disquietudes in the bosom of my Ormsby. To-morrow I will give you what will result from this intended interview. 'Till then, Adieu.

E 6

LET-

LETTER LXVI.

Lady Beaumont to Colonel Ormsby.

WHAT a painful scene have I just experienced! My fears were but too well founded; my presentiment has not deceived me in this instance.

The first object which struck my view was my persecutor, who solicits that I would swear to love him, and yet pursues every measure to make me hate him more and more.

My

My God ! what an interview ! what terror I suffered in the idea I was again in his power ! I saw myself torn from my Ormsby for ever ! I fainted away at his feet. I no sooner opened my eyes, than I saw the Viscount at mine ; my hands fast lockt in his—I gave a shriek, and withdrew my hands, terrified to death.

“ Your Ladyship appears frightened in seeing your husband at your feet. Lady Beaumont, I acknowledge, ’tis my fault, so it is also my torment. I have persecuted you ; my passion, driven to despair, has made me cruel. Your indifference has been the source of all my shocking proceedings ; your amiable

ble temper, your virtues, will shield you in future from my suspicions and jealousy. Your loss I have regretted every day of my life, and I feel I love you more than ever. I crave your pardon for the past; return to my house, which has been long deprived of its mistress, and you will make me happy. I shall set out in a few days; and I rely on your acquiescence."

These words gave me courage to address him with a

"No, my Lord, I cannot think of returning to your house. Your intentions demand my gratitude, and I can forget the injuries you have done; but I am resolved not to lose the tranquillity

quillity I enjoy under the roof and protection of my uncle. Our characters are as different as fire and water; we can therefore only make each other wretched; reason, prudence, and experience, have disunited us for the rest of our lives."

He interrupted me with impetuosity, accompanied with a terrible look.

I know, Lady Beaumont, yes, I know the cause of your refusal. I am not ignorant of the motives—I am better informed than you imagine. If I simulated at first, it was out of a regard for you, as I was not willing to make public a circumstance so dishonourable

nourable for us both. Let me now tell you, that you have forfeited all pretensions of complaint. Although I love you, remember you are unworthy my esteem and consideration, nor shall you remain many hours before you feel the vengeance of an injured husband."

He abruptly quitted the room, and his brother followed; who had made several efforts to appease him, but in vain. I bitterly reproached him for having introduced his brother into my uncle's house. He replied, that he had conjured him with tears in his eyes, to procure a sight of you; that his contrition and unhappy passion forced him to yield to his intreaties. (His brother
is

is a reputable character, but is easily led into any measures.) My answer was, " Sir, the horrid abuse of your brother's power has broken down the barrier between us : he has not the least claim to my affection ; and I believe I am discharging my duty to heaven in forgiving the tyrant by flying his tyranny." He took his leave with concern and astonishment. In this conflict I find some consolation, in assuring the man my heart has chosen, that I should think myself highly criminal to betray him ; rely on my continuing your ever faithful and affectionate

ELOISA BEAUMONT.

The

The Answer.

O Thou courageous and unfortunate Lady, although thou art the most beloved of thy sex! Hast thou, my dearest woman, resisted against intreaties and menaces of that savage who would tear thee from thy Ormsby? Do not repent of this generous effort: love will be a sure protector. In spite of all his barbarity, he cannot divide our souls, whatever he may our persons. O severe legislation! source of eternal prejudices, fetters and misfortunes! under her sanction, nature and sentiment are sacrificed to human policy! Power
and

and ambition are tyrants, who reduce every thing to one vulgar standard; who authorise a father to sacrifice the happiness of his child. Dear Eloisa! you have been that victim; nevertheless, you have bestowed your heart on me, and I will protect it against the united power of the universe.

Let the Viscount take care how he breaks the link which holds us: his life or mine shall pay the forfeit. I am a prey to all the horrors accompanying the fear of losing you. But if you love me, I shall still be happy—This happiness is independent of heaven, earth, and all the storms of fate.

Billet

Billet from Lady Beaumont.

COLONEL Ormsby, what is this
 that I am just told? Last night!
 —at the very hour you left me—the
 clashing of swords was heard--Heavens!
 The fright distracts me—Write, speak,
 I must be informed—

Billet

Billet from Colonel Ormsby,

To Lady Beaumont.

THE rencounter last night has nothing in it that is alarming; and since my Eloisa will be informed, I must tell her, that soon after I had left her, I was stopt by a man, who ordered me to draw my sword. I immediately put myself upon my guard, and the clashing of our weapons drew several to my assistance. 'Twas in vain I could persuade them to withdraw, which induced my adversary to disappear in an instant. It appears to be
some

some gentleman, who, perceiving his error, was afraid of being known. This, my Eloisa, is the whole history of what has so frightened you. Be composed, my adorable mistress; for while my life is dear to you, I shall never want courage to defend it upon all occasions.

Billet

Billet from Lady Beaumont,

To Colonel Ormsby.

SEVERAL days are elapsed without seeing you. My uneasiness becomes extremely painful. What is all this mystery? Be explicit. My imagination puts me to the rack—do not deceive me. Write—I am a prey to every thing alarming and terrible.

LET-

L E T T E R LXVII.

Lady Beaumont to Colonel Ormsby.

AH cruel Man! I have this moment learnt your dangerous situation. I have been minutely informed of your duel with the Viscount, and that you have been dangerously wounded. I am mad—distractedly mad. If you fall a victim to his furious jealousy and malice, I will not survive the disgrace. 'Tis I who have been the cause of this unfortunate rencounter. Without me, you had been happy. 'Tis your Eloisa
who

who has been your assassin. In a few minutes I will follow this note; for neither the Viscount, nor circumstance, nor the perils which surround me, shall stop me from seeing you—I have not as yet strength to crawl to my carriage.

LETTER LXVIII.

Colonel Ormsby to Lady Beaumont.

A Million of thanks to the frenzy of the Viscount, who has procured me the immense happiness of seeing your kind sollicitude for my recovery. Never did I taste a more exalted, a more sensible pleasure. I saw your bewitching eyes bathed in tears—I saw your great sensibility—I saw your matchless tenderness. My God! what supreme felicity have I not experienced in this instance of your affection. I am lost in wonder and admiration.

The

COLONEL ORMSBY. 99

The dangers which threatened me are now no more ; to you I owe this unexpected revolution. Adieu ! My love is unbounded, and so is my respect, admiration, and esteem.

ORMSBY.

F 2

L E T.

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L E T T E R L X I X .

Lady Beaumont to Colonel Ormsby.

THAT my Ormsby may not catch my melancholy, I will avoid every disagreeable subject. Although I am not as yet recovered from the shock of seeing the Viscount, and still ignorant of the measures he purposes pursuing, yet I cannot refrain from scribbling to the man I love. It is now three in the morning; I can find no rest. I have even some secret whispering

ing which tells me—I fear to lose a single instant to assure you, that I have for you all the ardour and affection which your virtues, your talents, your constancy can inspire. Adieu!

LETTER LXX.

Lady Beaumont to Colonel Ormsby.

A *Lettre de cachet*; an order from the king—I shall never see thee more! Oh, God! all then is over!—what crime have I done—pity thy Eloisa—take care of thy precious health—respect the age of the Viscount, or thou wilt lose all. Eloisa is going to be dragged hence—where? To what place?—I know not; but, my Ormsby, my inviolable attachment and my integrity will follow me, be it to a prison or a desert. I have all thy letters; thy
 portrait

portrait also; these are all my treasures which affect me, and these are all I shall possess in future. I give up willingly the rest.—They will scarcely allow me to dispatch two lines—my perturbation, my tears—When my Ormsby receives this—Barbarous tyrant! I forgive thee every insult, every violence, shouldst thou not molest the man I adore. Adieu; live to love thy poor Eloisa. Adieu! cruel word—'tis, perhaps, the last I shall ever write thee—Dear Ormsby! I cannot survive the misfortune of being torn from thee—But I will study to preserve my wretched existence for thy sake—Farewell!

LETTER LXXI.

Colonel Ormsby to Mr. Neville.

O'H what a cruel reverse of fortune !
deprecate with me those detestable
laws, which break down and annihilate
sentiment, friendship, and love.
Lady Beaumont is torn from her friends;
and thy friend is robbed of the object
he adored. My poor Eloisa is already
immured in some obscure convent—
She has been gone these eight days.
This horrid affliction has deprived me
of the power to put pen to paper. I
have been petrified with grief; my
eyes

eyes have refused their accustomed office; my despair brought on a deplorable insensibility. I was restored to my senses, but to give way to all the fury of my just indignation. That unrelenting savage has torn her from me. She is lost to society, and doom'd to lament in solitude the loss of a lover, who does not wish to breathe but for his Eloisa. When this furious tyger attacked me, sword in hand, why had he not found the way to have lain me dead at his feet? Why was he deprived of the sweet revenge of beholding my last convulsive gasp? Why am I fated still to live? What do I say? I do not live—I am deprived of my Eloisa—I am a lost undone wretch, expiring in all the agonies of despair and distraction.

tion. This is the meditated revenge of that infernal Countess Dubois. 'Tis certainly her machination—She has, no doubt, represented our affections as criminal--Monster of iniquity ! under the specious mask of candour and hypocrisy, she conceals a soul disposed for every species of cruelty. Her personal allurements, united to a masterly address, command our passions, and blind our reason. I shudder, when I think I could be attached to a mind like her's : and that it has been in her power to bring such a load of unmerited woes upon the devoted head of that angelic creature, Lady Beaumont !

My

My situation is really deplorable. I dare not espouse the cause of my Eloisa. Were I to follow the dictates of my heart, I should add to the weight of her afflictions; for those with whom I live are too great adepts in deception to discountenance popular prejudices, or to take from the vicious the pleasure of ruining the reputation of superior characters. Oh, Neville, Neville! what a degenerate world is this! Since I have been deprived of that lovely creature, I see all its vices in their proper point of view.

Eloisa! name for ever sacred; my passion increases with my misery. My God! what will become of me? My

letters will never more find their way ;
I write, however, and will write on
eternally. Some, perhaps, may reach
her perusal, by some accident or other.
The idea will keep me alive. Try all
your friends at court ; for some must
know the secret of her residence. I
will find her out, or die in the attempt.
Dear Neville, you are esteemed by the
Viscount ; be the advocate of suffering
merit ; reduce this despot to the stand-
ard of common sense and reason. Let
me grasp at some ray of hope ; and let
it be added to the numberless obliga-
tions I owe you. If there be any sym-
pathizing souls in the world, the vir-
tuous suffering Eloisa will find protec-
tors.

tors. Call up all your powers of persuasion; remember the tears, the terrors of two fond and faithful lovers, and be to us both the god of friendship.

LET-

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L E T T E R LXXII.

The Countess Dubois to Colonel Ormsby.

INDEED, Colonel Ormsby! I am not sufficiently accustomed to the sudden attacks of such a sprightly and enterprising a commander. I am mortally wounded with your bitter reproaches; you are frightfully pathetic; and should it continue, you will certainly give me the hysterics. You don't know, I presume, that I have the worst nerves in the world; you ought to know they are in the neighbourhood of the heart: and yet, cruel man, you
assault

COLONEL ORMSBY. III

assault me with such a woful countenance, that I am become the martyr of my too great sensibility. I am wonderfully out of spirits since I have read the history of your losing your mistress; but, Colonel Ormsby, it is not decent that I should become her victim. You accuse me of being the principal cause of persuading the Viscount to be reconciled to his Lady. How could you think me capable to bear the shock of such an imputation? The Countess Dubois, not to respect your passionate amours! Could she rob you of a darling mistress? For heaven's sake, be more reasonable. How can I help it, Colonel, if you adore a woman who has a husband jealous, and of a choleric disposition? 'Tis true, that he is a
little

little hasty; he may not be the most divine man breathing; and his manner of making love, not the most agreeable in the world. But am I to be responsible for this novel mode of making his Lady return passion for passion? When these vile husbands once take it ill that their wives should have lovers, 'tis impossible to make them hear reason. What would you have me do? I ought, no doubt, to cry my eyes out for the hard, dreadful hard fate, of these lovely udfortunates, who are so unreasonably persecuted.

You will have it, I find, that I received the Hubby in secret! this is rather a lucky idea. 'Twill prove, at least, I have discretion. He came,
saw,

saw, and conquered like Cæsar; and such is my uncommon caprice, I was highly amused with his animated declamation, and the wild transports of his being a — One day, when he was upon the high ropes of a tragical rant (which by the bye became him wonderfully), he concluded by a new oath, he would shut up the obdurate Fair-one among the celestials of a certain Abbey. As he swore by a place as sacred as the Styx, I dared not to interpose; and in a plaintive tone of voice, I deplored the unhappy fate of his all-accomplished, and nonpareil of a wife. What would you have me do more? would you have me hang myself for such a catastrophe? I confess, however,

however, that I think it must furiously disconcert your plan of operations : but, in the expressive phrase, *Il faut prendre patience, cher Ormsby !*

Do you know that, after all, your situation has, in one point of view, a wondrous advantage ? If Lady B. had been upon the spot, you would have been too familiar with the rays of her beauty ; she would of consequence become less interesting ; but this revolution embellishes her features, and keeps alive your feelings. A Lady is never more beautiful, than when she is seen in the perspective ; the imagination is then inflamed ; and we discover myriads of charms and raptures positively new, and wonderfully

fully attractive. Besides, a little grief is inexpressibly becoming, nay, enchanting : for by this charming auxiliary we acquire a sort of languishing sensations which are propitious to coquetry, and add a grace to beauty that is verging to the unlucky side of thirty. There is another circumstance attending it, of very great consolation to our vanity. A Lady, thus situated, becomes the topic of all conversations ; some interiorly envy her fate, and yet censure her with a becoming freedom ; others are satisfied to think she has been driven to acts of desperation ; her rivals will enumerate her foibles ; her favourites will extol her charms ; every one talks after his own manner : in a word,

Colonel,

Colonel, when things are driven to extremities, I find a Convent a very comfortable provision. Be consoled, Sir, at least do not write me any more of your deadly, dismal epistles; these lamentations are too powerful for my poor unguarded sympathizing heart—they may perhaps deprive me of my senses. In a word, if you do not change your stile, I must subject myself to the painful denial of not reading them: and you are very sensible, that it would be a most terrible privation.

L E T.

L E T T E R LXXIII.

Mr. Neville to Colonel Ormsby.

I AM determined to avoid the language of reprehension. I will no longer argue against your unhappy passion. Lady Beaumont's situation is still more deplorable than yours. 'Tis done; and while you are both so miserable, I must participate in your misfortunes. You may rely on my moving heaven and earth to serve you both. You know I have long time given up all communication with persons in place and power: nevertheless, I still believe
I can

I can render you some little services ; and for that purpose I have already written to a Lady whose amiable character and interest may possibly revoke the *Lettre de cachet* ; or if the Viscount should have the least pretensions to humanity, I may contribute to your future felicity.

What say you now to my former predictions ? Were I not friendly in my endeavours to draw off your attention to another object ? But I will not give way to such reflexions. Your misfortunes have so far impoisoned my usual cheerfulness and contentment, that I am no longer pleased with the flowers which decorate my gardens and fields.

I find

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I find no charms in my shady walks and improvements. I have philosophy to bear up against the attendants of an inevitable fatality; but my heart is ever open to the misfortunes of a friend. Rely on my endeavours to make you happy.

NEVILLE

LET-

L E T T E R LXXIV.

Madame St. Alban, to Colonel Ormsby.

TELL me, Sir, what is become of my unhappy friend, the persecuted Lady Beaumont? The report of a *Lettre de cachet* has found its way into our neighbourhood; and each has his manner of narrating. Some are advocates for her ladyship, others for the husband; and these seem to rejoice in having so plausible a pretext for murdering her reputation. I combat all their prejudices; yet I find more proselytes in my tears,
than

than in the reasons I adduce for her exculpation. I cannot bear the insulting laugh at her misfortunes. Good God! how fond is the world of slander and calumny! appearances, which throw a cloud over her virtues, will, I hope, be soon dissipated, and then I shall have the occasion of humbling some of her most inveterate slanderers. You see, my dear Sir, how we are blinded by ill-nature and envy; and that one false step often renders us the sport of those who confound error for vice, misfortune for crime. With a malicious sneer they extol her personal charms, and with a *But* rob her of her virtue. How can I find means to write to my distressed friend! Without doubt, the most rigorous orders are given to stop

her letters : but what can be opposed to the address and unwearied assiduity of a man who adores her, from finding out some expedient ? If you succeed in your inquiries, be so kind as to be the interpreter of what I suffer for her sake ; tell her, that, notwithstanding the malevolence of her enemies, I love her as cordially as ever ; and that my esteem is by no means diminished by her recent misfortunes. I know the purity of her sentiments—I know her virtues ;—I know the greatness of her soul—I know her extreme sensibility. These uncommon qualities render our friendship but the more sacred, since she has been so wantonly persecuted. Would to God I could find any way to her retreat ; partake of her solitude : her tears ;
her

her feelings ; that I might demonstrate, by the most affectionate and unwearied attentions, that an unfortunate woman can still retain a friend. I glory in being hers ; deny me not therefore the pleasure of hearing from her the moment it is in your power. With the greatest impatience, I wait your answer. I have lost my appetite by fretting ; I cannot sleep for thinking that my Eloisa is abandoned, separated from the man she loves, buried alive in a cloister, and there condemned to deplore the loss of her liberty, with every thing that is dear to her under heaven.

G 2

LET-

L E T T E R LXXV.

Mr. Neville, to the Viscount Beaumont.

MY LORD,

YOU may be very much surprised in the liberty I take of addressing you at this juncture; but I request you will indulge me so far as to read it to the end; and if it should not merit your attention, I shall be very sorry to have given you the trouble of a perusal.

You

You know, my Lord, that I have known Lady Beaumont from her tenderest infancy; that I was very intimate with her father; and from this connexion I enjoyed the pleasures of having cultivated a mind so uncommonly liberal and penetrating. I loved her as if she had been my daughter. After her marriage, you pressed my visits; and you must remember that I frequently opened your eyes to many of her good qualities. I soon saw, with concern, the opposition in your tempers and sentiments; you frequently treated her too harshly, which ended in your being sensible of the injury you did her. At last you have fallen upon a violent measure; but he

who seeks to repair a fault, my Lord, is no longer guilty ; and the evil which forces the blush into our faces, is a precious lesson to be turned to the profit of virtue. In whatever manner you may be induced to consider this procedure of my writing, a moment's reflexion must convince you, that a disinterested country gentleman, far from relations, family interests, or family cabals, who becomes the professed advocate for Lady Beaumont, can be nothing less than your friend : it is under this title I address you ; it is to this title that you ought to attribute the motives of my present conduct.

I have just learnt, my Lord, that you have caused your Lady to be confined

fined in a Convent. In the name of
 friendship, let me ask you her crime?
 Passion, no doubt, has an answer
 ready; but 'tis from your reason alone I
 request the solution of my question.
 A marriage has united you; here is
 your misfortune as well as her's: this
 marriage has imposed duties which she
 has inviolably kept; this marriage im-
 poses many sacrifices—She has made
 them. But you require things impos-
 sible: you will insist upon her loving
 you! For God's sake, my Lord, be
 not so unjust. Is it in our power to
 command that passion? Will authority
 call it into existence? Who can change
 his nature? All you can expect from
 Lady B. is the preservation of her
 virtue. The great disproportion of

your ages necessarily excludes sympathy. Lady B. considers you as a guide, who is to conduct her safe from those rocks and precipices which fall in the way of the young and unexperienced; and to give her the clue of that labyrinth in which she embarked her future happiness: such a guide would insure her gratitude; she would have considered him as her friend, guardian, and protector—But what can she think now, if you persevere in forcing her to make sacrifices, which in the nature of things are impracticable?

When unthinking parents barter the happiness of their children to sordid or ambitious views, what can they expect but disgrace, misery, and disappointment?

pointment? Society, from this source, is filled with husbands and wives who mortally hate each other; their offspring are of course neglected, and home becomes a detested prison.

But to return to Lady Beaumont. Although you have watched her conduct with a jealous eye, have you ever discovered even a shadow of infidelity? Cease then, my Lord, your unjust persecutions. You consented to an act of separation; she has lived with an uncle in a manner irreproachable; and yet from this asylum you have taken her to plunge her into an ocean of sorrow and misery. You have, no doubt, given ear to slander; you have suffered yourself to be infected with suspicions; and,

without any other proof, you disgrace, imprison, and dishonour such a woman as Lady Beaumont !

The moment you give way to cool reflexion, you will not forgive yourself for such abuse of your power. Be yourself again, my Lord ; restore your Lady to her liberty, and wipe away the shade you have thrown upon her reputation ; if you do not, you will soon be followed by remorse, which will prey upon your vitals, and blast your peace of mind. Do justice to your Lady's honour ; and who knows the impression such a procedure may have upon her feelings ? Can you suffer her to languish and pine away with grief and melancholy,

choly, in a state of dishonour? Is it there you have prepared her tomb, even while living? surely no; you are more humane than to persist in such a flagitious procedure: and I feel, by these tears which escape me, that you will also be equally affected.

LETTER LXXVI.

The Viscount Beaumont,

To Mr. Neville.

S I R,

I Cannot but approve of your sentiments, and your zeal in defence of Lady B. I am disposed to do her justice in acknowledging, that I still retain the highest sense of her virtue: perhaps it is my unhappy temper, to which I owe all my misfortunes and my injustice. I love Lady Beaumont; and yet I know she mortally hates me.

me.—She does not think of me but with horror; still I feel for her sufferings. I am at times resolved to restore her to her usual tranquillity—but I cannot bear the idea of her having at her feet any other man than her husband. She makes me miserable—I curse the hour I saw her.—I execrate my rival—to punish him, I am compelled to adopt these violent measures. While he lives, I cannot change or recede from my resolution already put into execution.

L E T-

LETTER LXXVII.

Colonel Ormsby to Mr. Neville.

O Moment of regret, joy, grief, and delight ! I have seen my Eloisa ; yes, my dear friend, I have seen her ; and my eyes have been fastened on that divine creature, in spite of iron gratings, locks, bars, bolts, moats and drawbridges ! Love has found its enamoured object.

In a fit of despair, I left the capital, with the romantic idea of visiting every convent in the kingdom. I was not above sixty miles from Paris, before

before I discovered a country that suited my melancholy ; a country as savage as my mind. I left my servant at the inn, and I wandered about as one forlorn and abandoned by the whole world. I had not gone far, before I saw to my right a vast romantic forest, on the other side a ridge of barren hills, with scarce a shrub or tree to be seen. The whole horizon which the eye could take in, presented nothing but what was woefully wretched and desolate. The disorder of my mind accorded with this immense dreary waste. The day was far advanced, when all of a sudden the sky began to lower, a furious wind sprung up, and an approaching storm roused me from my lethargy.

I sought

I sought for shelter ; and the first object which caught mine eye was a large castle, towards which I inclined my footsteps, lest I should be overtaken by darkness and the coming tempest, which was gathering in from every quarter. I stopt short of this antique building ; and as soon as I had contemplated its walls, its vanes, &c. I discovered it to be a convent. A gleam of hope, as if by inspiration, shot across my imagination ; and my fond heart suggested the idea, that this might be the prison of my long lost Eloisa. Perhaps, I exclaimed, she is this moment thinking on her forlorn Ormsby. Little does she think I am so near her ; and while so short an interval is between us, she may de-
 plore

plore the many miles of our supposed separation. O presentiment of love! whisper in her fond ear that her ever-faithful lover is wandering about her mansion.

Thus absorbed in the dear idea, I saw a country-man pass the draw-bridge, singing as he went; and by his dress and implements, I did not doubt but he was the gardener of the convent. I followed him at some distance, approaching a little cottage, where there was a young woman spinning at the door, with a little child playing by her side. She no sooner spied the gardener, than she ran out to meet him; the child flew into his arms; he kisses them both, and re-
turns

turns delighted to his cabin after the fatigues of the day. "They love each other; they enjoy the blessings of heart-felt pleasure and rural content; their innocence and industry insure them health and a peaceable habitation -- And Lady Beaumont! -- and I" --

At these words, I thought I was near enough to be overheard; I retired, although I had a strong desire to approach the place. The unhappy, I believe, contract insensibly a shyness in their manner; they burn to speak their woes, and yet they tremble lest any one should divine them. In this state of distraction, I soon found myself at the entrance of the forest.

Night

Night was advancing rapidly upon me, and every thing was presently hid in darkness. The silence which prevailed around me, the savageness of the place, the risk I ran in exposing myself without any weapon of defence; yet nothing could induce me to quit my then situation. I passed this night in a condition more dead than alive. My wandering feet reconducted me within a little space of the convent; I still rambled on, lost in the profoundest reveries of my Eloisa, till the air was filled with the sound of a death-bell. I was then struck with the horror of my situation. A cold sweat seized upon my whole frame; I thought I should have expired upon the spot. My tortured imagination presented

presented Lady Beaumont as at the last gasp ; with terror I approached this solitary abode, conducted by the sound of that doleful messenger of death. I at last tottered against its walls ; I bathed them with my tears — I thought I was prostrate at her tomb, and paying her my last obsequies. In this position I passed the rest of the night. Day-break again discovered the lonely cottage ; and the same man goes out of it, and meets me in the road. My hair was dishevelled ; my looks wild and haggard ; a deathly paleness overspread my whole countenance ; and my cheeks, covered with tears, made such an impression upon this poor man, that he respectfully approached me, and asked, if he
could

could be of any service to a gentleman who appeared to him to be in great distress. I made no scruple to reserve the caution of calling Lady Beaumont my sister, of mentioning her name, who was forced against her will by a severe and cruel husband into a convent, and that I was ignorant—"Stop, Sir! Lady Beaumont! There is a gentlewoman of that name in the abbey you see yonder. Poor creature! I hear she cries day and night. Since I have been to work in the wilderness, I have espied her several times through the hedges, carrying a little picture in her hand, talking, crying, and kissing it as though it was alive."

Judge,

Judge, my dear Neville, my astonishment, my joy, my transports ! I embraced this honest labourer ; I called him my tutelar deity ; and told him, that he could indeed serve me, by restoring me to life and to my senses. I implored him to favour a secret correspondence by letter ; that I would send mine under cover to him. He readily consented to my proposition ; and no sooner had we interchanged names and places, than I assured him my purse and fortune were at his command.

“ O, Sir, what is that you say ? do not propose any thing to me ; if you do, you will take away all the pleasure I shall have in serving you.”

“ But,

“ But, my worthy friend (for so I must now call you) before I quit this place, could I not procure a single glance of her face at the window ? If I can procure but one look, I shall be the happiest of men.”

He promised to use his best endeavours, and advised I would retire till the evening, for fear I should be seen ; and before I left him, he pointed with his finger to the window of Lady Beaumont’s apartment.

I was scarce out of sight, before I met my servant trembling, out of breath, seeking me in the forest ; and for his consolation, I related to him by what accident I had discovered the
convent

convent where Lady Beaumont was concealed.

With the most painful solicitude I counted the tedious hours, when I was to repair to the gardener; and long before the hour arrived, I set out for his habitation. I soon saw him at some distance, making towards me, as he was burning to tell me the success of his commission. I was to see the lovely Eloisa at her window about the close of the evening. My eyes were eternally fixed upon the place where I was to see my beautiful and imprisoned mistress. The least noise made me tremble in every limb. I feared a discovery. I hoped, languished, I was ready to expire; when at last I saw her. What a situ-

a situation for two tender passionate lovers!—I read volumes in her all-expressive eyes. She seemed as if she would fling herself into my arms; I extended mine; I threw myself upon my knees, while my stifled sighs found their way to their lovely object. She answer'd them with sobs. How beautiful, how affecting did she not appear! Her grief gave new lustre to her charms! She retired, in making signs for me to remain. She soon appeared again, and threw me down a slip of paper with the following words:

“ O God! is it thee my Ormsby!—
 I dare not believe my own eyes; my
 heart, however, assures me 'tis my
 Ormsby! My joy is too great—but fly,
 VOL. II. H my

my faithful lover! Thy danger, my reputation, thine also—fly—take my soul along with thee—Adieu!”

I devoured this tender Billet with my kisses, I covered it with my tears. Pleasure, grief, trouble, fear, all seiz'd at once upon my heart. The bell rings—my Eloisa disappears—and I remained as if annihilated.

The instant I recovered the use of my limbs, I crawled to the gardener's cottage. His wife, Thereba, was sensibly affected with the agitation in which she saw me. Their supper was ready; they begged I would accept their little pittance; I sat down, and supped like a prince. Never did the
most

most splendid feast appear half so delicious! I imagined I saw the golden age restored, and that I was supping with our primæval parents in paradise. Theresa rises from table the first; takes the candle, and conducts me to the cradle, to *see* her babe as he slept. You must allow, Sir, that he is the *moral* of his father; and then she kissed them both for the sake of the resemblance. “ Dear Infant of my Guardian Angels, while I live, misfortune shall never disturb thy future days. Born in the bosom of candour and innocence, thou hast a right to my care and protection. Sleep on, sweet boy; from this day I shall consider thee as my adopted son. Lady Beaumont and I will never suffer thee to want a friend.

H 2

I then

I then bent over the cradle; and while
I gave him a kiss, slippt into it a purse
of twenty guineas.

I am still in the village of ***. 'Tis
from hence I have written you this
long epistle. I must quit this sacred
ground to-morrow, which rends my
heart with grief.

LET.

LETTER LXXVIII.

Lady Beaumont to Colonel Ormsby.

HAVE I seen thee ! my soul ! what a moment for us both ! I would that language could paint my sweet agitation, the immensity of my joy, the animated throbbings, those delicious tears, which never have been shed but for my Ormsby. My very fears became pleasures ! Believe thy love ; these tender instances of thy attachment will never be effaced from my memory. My heart is alive to thee,

H 3

even

even under the load of my afflictions ;
I feel myself as if restored to my liberty, since I love thee to idolatry.

Where art thou, my Ormsby ? In vain I call thee, since thou canst no longer hear thy Eloisa. Every instant which runs on, every step thou takest, thou art further and further removed from this gloomy habitation. 'Twas but a little while, and thou wast before my eyes ; near thy fond mistress !—Now alas !—Good God ! a letter sure from my Ormsby !—Yes, he does love me ! and since I have been immured here, I feel my passion to increase more and more. I am now lost to thee, to society, and to the whole world. I pass my days in a re-perusal of thy kind epistles,

epistles, and pouring out my soul to thy dear resemblance. Thy presence has enchanted me; the rage of jealousy, the rigid vigilance of those who watch my steps; nothing could take away the felicity of seeing thee again. Thy guardian angel surely conducted thee hither; a virtuous attachment, a union, ratified in heaven's chancery, will sooner or later have its due reward. The Deity who has created this wondrous passion, does not judge his creatures by partial laws: and minds of a superior class have a code of their own, independent of country, climate, the prejudices of education, or the received modes established through ignorance or inhumanity. Let the world censure, nay, condemn

damn me, my integrity makes me rise superior to the shafts of envy or detraction.

That good creature, the gardener, is become an object I consider with much esteem. From his mouth I have frequently the satisfaction of hearing thy eulogiums.

“ Ah ! my Lady, what an amiable, generous, and tender-hearted gentleman is your brother !”

My brother, my friend, my lover !—
 thou art still even more to me than all
 these dear relatives. I commend very
 much your precaution, in calling me
 your sister ; there is nothing mean or
 censurable

cenfurable in a conduct, while the motive ennobles it ; and I fhall always know how to value this proof of your delicacy :—but this is not the firft time I have difcovered your refpect for the woman you love : I think I have no fear of intrufting you with my honour, my reputation, and my happinefs.—Adieu !

L E T T E R LXXIX.

Colonel Ormsby to Lady Beaumont:

AH! why was I forced to fly the place which retains all I value in life? Here I am in the midst of a croud, deserted and alone. Their society is become burdensome, because they call off my attention from my lovely woman. What a continual torment, to live with beings who have scarce one idea, and insensible to all the refined delights of which my soul is so extremely susceptible! 'Twas under the humble roof of that poor countryman, I tasted some instants of happiness;

piness; but here I am again fallen a prey to a settled melancholy. Alas! what will be the fate of her I so ardently adore? She weeps, and I cannot kiss away her tears; she sighs, and I cannot console her in my arms! I lose all patience, when I see so many women rioting in irregular desires, with countenances and manner which do not belye the inclinations of their hearts; while thou, who art all goodness and gentleness, must waste thy youth and beauty in the solitude of a dismal cloister! But is there no expedient for breaking thy chains? Nothing to counteract this crying injustice? O, my Eloisa! I cannot bear the idea of seeing thee thus buried alive. I can brave every danger; a croud of ob-

stacles will not shake my resolves. I will release thee, my life, from thy persecutor. We will then seek a country where virtue is more respected; we will once more enjoy the sweet intercourse of so divine a unison. The project transports me with joy--Say the word, and 'tis done. I love to figure to myself those places, where, under a serene and temperate sky, among a people virtuous and humane, we may pass the rest of our days in all the delights of a reciprocal, delicate, and refined love.

At present I am doomed to deplore thy loss day and night; and my only consolations are, to seek thee in the most lonesome walks, which we have so often traversed

traversed together : there I call upon my Eloisa ; there I search for the traces of thy footsteps ; there I carry with me the dear pledges of thy tenderness. Dost thou not often turn thy sweet pretty eyes towards the place where I worshipped my divinity ? Dost thou not let them wander towards that deserted forest, where I passed the whole night ? Dost thou, my Eloisa, feel, like me, all the horrors of our separation ?

LET-

L E T T E R LXXX.

Lady Beaumont to Colonel Ormsby.

MY heart begins to fail me! my courage has at last abandoned me! This separation becomes more and more painful. The door is perhaps shut upon me for ever! I see no end to my tortures but with the loss of my life. Banished thy presence, I am robbed of every consolation.

I have just read over thy last tender Billet-doux. Yes, my dear Ormsby,
you

you merit that I adore you. Do not forget to write to my ever-compassionate St. Alban ; I would gladly write ; but by multiplying my letters, I fear a discovery of our correspondence. Tell her the reasons which force me to remain in silence. I know the goodness of her heart ; she will forgive the woman who loves, without suspecting the sincerity of her friendship.

I write frequently to my uncle : he is the only person living that the Viscount has suffered to address me without his superscription. I divide my time with my lover, and this best of relations ; and yet I have been taken from his house like a criminal !

Where-

160 COLONEL ORMSBY.

Where-ever I turn my eyes, I perceive
none but disagreeable objects. My
spirits are too much affected to hold
my pen. Adieu! Take care of your
health; if you wish to preserve that
of your unfortunate

ELOISA.

LET-

LETTER LXXXI.

Governor Beaumont to Lady Beaumont.

AS my brother is going to write to the Abbess of your Convent, I have embraced the occasion of transmitting you this under his cover, that it may come with more safety to your hands. Believe me, my dear Sister, I feel exceedingly for your misfortune; and that I shall not neglect in any instance to serve you to the utmost of my ability. I love my Brother; but my regard for him does not exclude that which I have for you. I pity
you

you from the bottom of my soul. Since your detention, I have not left your husband, in hopes of obtaining your return to your uncle's. He is become a mere madman. He will listen to nothing. He is weak enough to think, that this violent conduct will force you to love him! Your uncle has written to him several times; he has also received one from that worthy man Mr. Neville. Both pledge themselves to prove your innocence. Sometimes he execrates this act of violence—he is disposed to accord your liberty: but in a moment he names a Colonel Ormsby; and becomes so furious, that I tremble for his life.

“She

“ She hates me, and yet I must feel for the pains her conduct and want of affection have brought upon her ! Let her sigh on in solitude ; let her expire in tears ; let her die cursing the author of her woes ; — what do I care for her virtue ? It is a return of affection that I would have.—But why do I talk of her virtue ? She loves another ; and yet my vengeance has not stabbed them both with my own hands ! ”

A colour flushes in his face — he trembles with passion — he foams at the mouth. — I endeavour to pacify him ; he avoids me as a pest ; and for half a day together, no one dares approach his apartment.

The

The only amusement he takes is hunting; he affects to ride the most spirited restive horses in his stable; and he is the first for leaping a hedge, a ditch, or galloping down a precipice. You see, my dear Lady, what a man is, when given up to his passions. He loves you to distraction; he is, if possible, more unfortunate than yourself. He persecutes the object he adores, and torments himself for his cruelty. The same sensibility which puts the poignard in his hand, fills his soul with tenderness and compassion: this latter disposition I want to bring him to by degrees; and I have not a fear of the success, if you would bring yourself to second my endeavours.

He

He has proposed your return to his house ; will you consent to this proposition ? If you will, I can obtain but every thing. In less than two days, you shall be your own mistress ; you will then appear in public with *eclat*, and slander will be put to silence. My dear Sister, reflect maturely on the consequences, if you persist in your animosity to a man on whom depends your very existence. You are still in all the bloom of your youth and beauty ; would you destroy them both by a conduct which leaves you nothing but fruitless tears, vexations, and regrets ? The man on whom you have unfortunately bestowed your affections, is young, impetuous, a lover of pleasure, one who by his rank and connexions

nexions is thrown into the vortex of dissipation, vice and gallantry. How can you be assured, that his regrets for your absence are not already subsided, by giving way to the seductions to which he is hourly exposed? Who knows that his career at court will not corrupt his heart, and make him pant after an establishment which may gratify his pride, his vanity, at the expence of a romantic fruitless passion? Do not think, my Lady, that I seek to frighten you; but this I can assure you, that it is currently reported, that there is a marriage upon the tapis between him and a young widow, who is rich and of a distinguished family. O, my Sister! cease to make
a god

a god of the being who is but a man; a man, who is always within a hair's breadth of an infidelity. Pardon the freedom with which I write, for the sake of my candour, my zeal and my friendship. My brother has many faults, I confess; but you may correct them in a great measure by your usual sweetness of temper, and usual moderation. If you are determined to act in opposition to what I here so ardently recommend, my brother will be condemned to pass the rest of his days in discontent and misery; while you, in the bloom of all your charms, will be fated to waste your days in a world of pain and wretchedness.

I expect

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I expect your answer with impatience; it will decide your destiny; judge, then, how much we are all interested in the result of your final determination.

The

The Answer.

THE favour you have honoured me with, I have read with all the attention it so highly merits. My God ! what a proposition have you made to so unfortunate a woman ? It is a sure proof how little you know your brother, when you advise me to return to his house. I have been for years the sport of his illiberal suspicions and cruel conduct ; every thing in my power was done to soften his savage temper. How often have I not thrown myself at his feet, and implored him to take my life, rather

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than to make me so unhappy? My passive submission served but to increase his tyranny. As you are his brother, you will spare me the recital of my unmerited sufferings. By a positive refusal of a reconciliation, I may save him from committing many crimes; for his unheard-of cruelties to me surpass all credibility.

When I reflect on what I suffered while under his roof, when I was a stranger to the passion which now destroys me; how my steps were watched, my gestures, looks and words misinterpreted; what would it now be, since my heart is agitated with the most lively affection that woman ever felt? This circumstance alone shuts my heart
and

and my reason against any proposition of that nature. The Viscount has been pleased to throw a shade over my reputation ; he has robbed me of my family and friends ; I am immured among a class of beings who are steeled to the finer feelings of humanity ; they cannot even conceive the extent of my woes, nor the sacrifice I am making to sentiment and sensibility.

There is, however, one dear mortal left me, who can participate in all my affections, my pains ; and my courage to resist against violence. He will do justice to the integrity of my intentions, the purity of my sentiments, although he perhaps will be their victim. It is to him I appeal

— he is to me the whole universe. Yes, I do love him; and this love ennobles human nature. My infant years have been devoted to the man I could not bear; with him I have known nothing but fears and bitter anguish of mind: after this severe trial, I enjoyed a short respite of liberty. This state I considered as the first of blessings. I gave into the fashionable dissipation which is permitted to persons of rank and fortune; I thought I tasted the first delights of society. This dream was wofully transitory; and I soon found a horrid listlessness for those frivolous amusements, which appeared so ravishing at the first view. Sighs frequently escaped me, without any particular object;

ject ; and I involuntarily wished to meet a being to whom I could address them. Chance threw in my way one, who, like myself, was tired with the same eternal round of public diversions ; he sought after those solid pleasures which spring from the union of minds endowed with delicacy, honour, sentiment and sensibility. I no sooner saw him, than my heart, by some secret cause, knew the sympathy of our tastes, our sentiments and our dispositions. I could not withdraw my eyes from off him ; when he spoke, my heart bounded with joy ; and from that moment I felt a new passion had seized upon my whole soul. Our acquaintance soon grew into friendship ; that friendship soon displayed all

his good and shining qualities; and I discovered in him a thousand charms, both of person and mind, which few can boast. They were in themselves sufficient to inspire me with a partiality in his favour; and a heart less susceptible than mine, would have found itself enslaved. I have, however, summoned all my reason to my assistance; she confirms the choice; virtue also approves—I must—I must love him as long as I live. His attachment has not infringed any of my principles; and he implicitly submits to the most painful conditions I have hitherto imposed.

It is to you, Sir, I make this open confession; judge, by this, the regard
and

and confidence I repose in your discretion? Let me conjure you never to press me more upon a subject I cannot consider but with horror; and as to the reports concerning Colonel Ormsby, do not believe them: I know his manner of thinking too well, to indulge an idea so injurious to his honour and probity — He is not insensible of what I have done for his sake as well as mine; he sees the evils to which I am incessantly exposed to; and he knows also that my only consolation is in his fidelity. It is therefore impossible he can deceive me; for in that case he would become the most base, the most perfidious of men.

I 4

I have

I have lately discovered in this convent a young lady, who is nearly as unhappy as myself. A sympathy of misfortunes have given rise to an intimacy between us; and we mutually confide to each other all our pains and all our persecutions. Alas! I pray heaven to preserve this precious friend! The extreme delicacy of her health makes me fear I shall soon lose her. Before I conclude this vile scrawl, permit me to solicit you to obtain permission for my return to my uncle's. If you can succeed, I shall owe you my life, and my future happiness.

I am, &c.

E. BEAUMONT.

L E T-

LETTER LXXXII.

Lady B. to Colonel Ormsby.

DEAR Ormsby ! I have just given thee another proof of my affection. I have received a letter from Governor Beaumont, who proposes my liberty if I would return to the Viscount's. I shuddered at the proposition, and rejected it in all its forms. I would rather remain imprisoned all my days, than be denied the sight of the man I love. Were I to be reconciled to him, we should be finally separated ; my captivity

would become a hundred times more cruel and languishing. Thou lovest me, I adore thee, Ormsby. Several of my friends are employed to release me from hence ; perhaps they may succeed so far as to see thee again : at all events, I have the secret pleasure in the reflexion that this sacrifice is for thee alone. My Ormsby follows me, and enchants me. It accompanies me to the sanctuary—thou art the god I invoke. Would that I could raise altars to thy memory ! Heavens, how I love thee ! And in spite of every thing I will persevere in loving thee, while I retain a sense of thy virtues : — and that sense I hope to enjoy to the latest hour. The rigour of my deplorable fate does not reach

reach the seat of my affections: they are heaven-born, and retain a sufficient degree of their original fire to flourish even in a convent.

Several days have elapsed, and yet Theresa brings no letters. God forbid, that the Governor be not well founded in his suggestions! No; it is impossible. I will not do thee so crying an injustice, to suppose thee guilty of such a crime! Every thing but thy silence assures me to the contrary. Adieu!

P. S. I am tempted to write to our St. Alban. I owe her this instance of my friendship.

LETTER LXXXIII.

Lady Beaumont to Colonel Ormsby.

WHAT a night have I passed !
it has been the war of all
the elements ! The day at last is re-
turned, but my fears are not dissipated.
O, my Ormsby ! this sad solitude be-
gins to shew itself in all its aggra-
vated horrors ! It appears as if I was
the only being in the creation. The
tempest was the most furious I ever
heard ; the whole building rocked, and
every clap of thunder threatened the
destruction of the whole edifice. In
the

the midst of this universal uproar, methought I heard the most piercing groans—I flew to my window, and by some illusion I thought I heard my lover’s plaintive voice. By the flashes of the lightning, I could perceive no object near me; still I am possessed of some disaster. Every now and then I ventured to fix my regards on that particular spot where I first beheld thee. Early in the morning I saw the gardener, who by a sign of the head gave me to understand he had no letter. Alas! thou dost not write as usual! dost thou fear a discovery? or is it that thou hast already forgotten thy Eloisa? Pardon me, pardon me, dear Ormsby. I still hope to hear from thee to-morrow. How long the tedious interval!

terval ! write, if it be but one word, and my fears will vanish. Adieu ! I dare not tell thee to what excess my uneasiness has transported me.—Gracious God ! have I lost all I hold dear in this world ? Why will you, by so long a silence, torment me with such excruciating sensations ? Tears are now the intervals of ease ; while I can indulge them, I am easy ; and that I do indulge them, be witness earth and heaven. In pity to my bleeding heart, do not suffer me to realize all the tortures of a desponding sensibility. I can only add, that I am positively stark-mad. Again adieu !

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L E T T E R LXXXIV.

Mr. Neville to Colonel Ormsby.

IS it really true that Colonel Ormsby is going to marry the Countess of **** ? I esteem my friend too much to believe a syllable of the matter ; but for God's sake, take care that this report does not reach the ears of Lady Beaumont.

It is a little century since I have heard from either of you ; what can occasion this very long silence ? The Viscount has answered my letter ; and I find my endeavours were but a fruitless

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less attempt. I have, however, still a friend at court, which gives me hopes we shall be able to obtain his Majesty's permission for Lady Beaumont to return to her uncle's. Pray heavens I may succeed in my expectations—what joy would it be for you both, as well as pleasure to your

NEVILLE.

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LETTER LXXXV.

Lady Beaumont to Colonel Ormsby.

WHAT can this mean? Three of my letters remain unanswered! Oh, Ormsby! I have lost my faith in thy promises—I have called up every shocking idea—endeavoured to tear thee from my heart—yet still thou art about it, and my passion increases by desperation. Surely my misfortunes are progressive: a greater and a greater has succeeded; but this dreadful silence has wound up the whole,

whole, and will inevitably destroy my peace of mind for ever ! Let me conjure thee to write instantly—if I be not indulged, thy Eloisa will bid thee an everlasting adieu ! dreadful thought ! My blood is chilled with the bare idea ! Wretched woman ! thou art abandoned by the object of thy sole affections, and now forced to waste thy miserable days among the most insensible and stupid of mortals !—Theresa has a letter !—it is from my Ormsby—Oh no ; it is my uncle—Good God ! he writes me word—but am I not mistaken ?—shocking intelligence ! he writes me of thy marriage with the Countess of ****. My uncle believes it ; he insists—he is imposed on.—O do not fear that
I should

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I should accuse thee of so black a treason:—I am too unhappy not to rely upon thy professions of love and constancy. Nothing can shake my faith—nevertheless—Ah ! if—— This news would end my sorrows and my life together. Write—write ; tell me thou lovest me, or I am irreparably undone—my head turns giddy—Adieu ! adieu !

LET-

L E T T E R LXXXVI.

*The Countess Dubois to the Abbess of *****

L ORD Beaumont, my dear Cousin,
 requests you will have the strictest
 eye upon the conduct of his Lady ;
 and that you stop all letters but those
 addressed to you under his own hand.
 Tell me in your next how she bears
 her dishonour and her confinement ?
 If she possess the art of preserving her
 beauty ; and if she remain still over
 head and ears in love with her inamo-
 rato ? Be particular, for every thing is
 interesting

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interesting that falls from your elegant pen. For the present, I know of nothing new, except it be that the lovely and charming Countess of * * * * is married to Colonel Ormsby.

I am, &c.

DUBOIS;

LET.

L E T T E R LXXXVII.

Lady Beaumont to Colonel Ormsby.

WHAT a wretched prospect opens to my view! I can no longer bear this accumulated affliction—All my hopes then are fled? Is it you who have plunged me into this misery? My peace of mind is totally murdered! my future hours marked with fruitless wailings, sighs, tears, and endless solitude! Could I have ever thought of so base a treachery! Vile deceiver! My poor unfortunate companion has the honour, I find, of being allied

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allied to you; and as an instance of your treason, read her brother's letter.

“ Dear Sister, 'tis with the most sensible pleasure, I inform you, that our near relation, the Countess, is married to *Comte Ormsby*, Colonel du Regiment de * * *. As this event seems to give universal satisfaction, I would not defer a moment in imparting it, that you may partake of the pleasure of our family. Excuse the shortness of this epistle, as I must sit down to write letters of felicitation.”

LET.

LETTER LXXXVIII.

Lady Beaumont to Madame St. Alban.

DEAR and tender-hearted St. Alban! if you still love me, pray for a speedy deliverance from all my sorrows. Could you ever have thought that this godlike man, who seemed to possess one of the best hearts in the world, has at last deceived me? He is married—Yes, married to the Countess of * * * *. My pride has struggled hard to root my unhappy passion from my breast; yet still I find that I adore the traitor! Oh, take pity of my distress—

tres—'tis my last sigh I shall ever send you!—I am mad—To be certain of my fate, I have dispatched my trusty friend, the gardener of the convent, to Paris; and under the pretext of seeing his father, he has obtained permission of absence. I wait his return, which will decide my fate—my strength fails me—I fear I shall break my heart—I can scarce write the word Adieu!—without doubt, 'tis for ever!

The Answer.

O My lost friend ! is it at last that I hear from you to tell me of your despair and distraction ! Be consoled, my dear Eloisa ; Colonel Ormsby loved you too passionately to marry any other woman. I am morally certain he could not commit so base an action. Wait the arrival of your messenger ; my life for it, you will find you have been imposed upon. Let me conjure you to have courage ; you are loved, and will be so always. In your terrible solitude, the imagination takes the alarm with more avidity than it receives

receives consolation. Rest persuaded, your gardener will dissipate your terrors. I pledge my life for the Colonel; although I am not the most credulous in the world. Be comforted, I have a pre-sentiment, I shall still see my lovely friend delivered from her prison, and be also supremely happy. Your lover, let me repeat, knows too well the treasure he possesses, in having the affections of a Lady Beaumont. Have I not often heard him break out in these rapturous expressions?

“ Lady Eloisa is not, madam, to be classed with our modern race of beauties—She has charms peculiar to herself. I love her to madness. Angelic woman! the passion is as durable

as life itself! Yet I fear such an inestimable a treasure will never fall to my lot! the sacrifice is too great—I am really too presumptuous! Oh! that I could make her as happy as she is good, amiable, and accomplished! You know, madam, that your friend is wondrously handsome; you know her elegance of manners; her enchanting address; her great superiority of understanding: her refined taste; her passion for the Belles Lettres; and she knows that I honour her, esteem her, and adore her.”

The animated manner in which he would run on for the hour together, plainly shewed he spoke the language of his feelings: this language may be mimicked by a thousand pretenders to senti-

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sentiment and passion; but I have studied the human heart too deeply, not to distinguish the difference between feeling, and pretending to feel: besides, my friend, I did not see nor hear him talk as my lover. The moment that the gardener arrives, write to me, if it be but a single line.

Your's,

ST. ALBAN.

K 3

LET.

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LETTER LXXXIX.

St. Croix, the Valet of Colonel Ormsby,

To Lady Beaumont.

MY LADY,

IT is by the orders of my poor master, that I take the liberty of writing to your Ladyship, to inform you that he is so *mortally* weak, that he cannot move in his bed. Permit me to tell your Ladyship, that I had the very great imprudence to tell my master this morning, that the gardener
from

from the convent was in the kitchen; he ordered me to call him up, and the moment he clapped his eyes on him, he fell into a swoon. Before my poor master was recovered again, the man *ax'd* me if it was true, that the Colonel was married? I assured him, upon my honour, that nothing was more untrue, or farther from his thoughts. I have not dared to give him your Ladyship's letters, for fear of a return of his fever, as he is not as yet out of danger. As soon as the doctors say, I may venture to give them, I shall not fail doing it. The sight of the gardener has, I believe, done my master a world of good, so that he seems mending all the day, and I now begin

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to hope he will get the better of his
dangerous malady.

I am, with the profoundest respect,

My Lady,

Your Ladyship's

Humble Servant,

at command,

ALEXANDER ST. CROIX.

LET-

L E T T E R X C.

Lady Beaumont to Colonel Ormsby.

MY dear Ormsby ! I know not by what miracle I am still living ? Had it not been for our St. Alban, I should have died with grief. Good God ! what a snare has been laid to blast my hopes, and make me die the victim of my sensibility ? I have been induced to accuse the best of men with the blackest of crimes, while he was at death's door with a fever. Canst thou forgive me ! Yes, I know thou wilt forgive me ; but I cannot easily for-

give myself for my injustice. For heaven's sake, let St. Croix write every day, 'till my Ormsby can assure me of his convalescence. My prayers shall be offered up to the throne of mercy, for thy speedy recovery—'till when I shall not have one minute's ease. Adieu!! God bless you!

LET-

LETTER XCI.

Lord Beaumont to his Lady.

BEFORE you receive this intimation of a fall I have had from my horse, and my fever, I shall, in all probability, be no more. I welcome death, since it terminates all the evils with which I have been tormented. All your crime, my Lady, is in your not having loved me; all my misery, that I could not bear up against your hatred. My passions increased in proportion to your indifference—Nature justifies us both. I employ my last

K 6

moments

moments in giving orders for your liberty, and distribution of my effects. Would that I could find your pardon in tracing these words—I can write no more—farewell for ever!

LET-

L E T T E R XCII.

Colonel Ormsby to Lady Beaumont.

TH Y lover, Eloisa, is still alive,
and ever faithful to his vows.
Could that invaluable and all-accom-
plished creature think I could sacrifice
to ambition the paragon of her sex?
Could I ever efface from my fond
memory, that my Eloisa enjoys the
uncommon lot, not only of having a
bewitching form and face, but that she
has a soul made up of tenderness, de-
licacy, and purity! Heaven, my love,
has been propitious to my prayers; I
am

am in a great measure restored to my wonted health, and to hear that my Eloisa loves me still; again, my eyes have been blessed with reading the charming language of my Eloisa's love. How magical their effects! Again, am I feelingly alive to the sweet deliriums of a reciprocal passion. But when I think on the obstacle which divides us, my heart is ready to sink under the weight of its affections. In this predicament, I feel a thousand contending passions. I have courage and fortitude; and while my Eloisa bids me live in the assurances of her affections, I will brave every species of misfortune. Though you have scolded me, my dear mistress, yet your dear epistles breathe a language which delights my enamoured

moured soul. Ah! my Elcifa! What hast thou not suffered! I cannot doubt the ardour of thy love; and I will repay the divine woman with a never-failing tenderness: for my life and happiness are wound up in the persuasion thou lovest me.

Gracious powers! What is this that I have now before my eyes?—Do I dream?—I have a letter which informs me, that Lord Beaumont is ——— My Eloisa is delivered from her chains and imprisonment!—Pardon me—I will not add a word more—My pen totters in my hand—Great Author of our being, preserve my life—preserve my Eloisa's!

L E T-

L E T T E R X C I I I .

Lady Beaumont to Colonel Ormsby.

I Scarce breathe. I tremble more than ever for thy safety. Thy letter terrifies and delights me. Yes, death has dissolved a connection which has imbittered the most precious years of my life. I now forgive him for all his cruelties; I feel for the miseries his unhappy temper has brought upon us both: but let us draw a veil over all his errors—I am in a situation not to be described—Adieu.

There

* * *There is a period of two years between this Letter, and that which closes the genuine history of a Nobleman, who has recently lost, at St. Germain en Laye, the heroine of this Novel.*

L E T T E R X C I V .

Colonel Ormsby to Mr. Neville.

TWO painful centuries are at last elapsed—Heaven has now united me to the angelic Lady Beaumont! 'Tis not in the power of language to describe my transports, or you to conceive the superlative state of my felicity.

city. Yesterday, the twenty-second of June, Providence sealed the contract, which our hearts have so long ratified. I heard every tongue exclaim, What a lovely woman! I hope she will be happy! I gaz'd upon her with ineffable delight—her hand trembled in mine—and her confusion was so great, that I was alarmed lest it would prove too much for her spirits, and the delicacy of her tender frame. Oh, how delightful to proclaim one's happiness to the whole world, and to glory in a choice which does so much honour!

We are now with her uncle; but we shall set out in a few days to fix our paradise in a retreat from the capital. My wife (whom I shall always consider

as

as my charming and affectionate mistress) will take with her the amiable and sensible *Madame* St. Alban; we only want my honourable and respectable Neville, to make the party complete. Felicitate your grateful friend, who has the supreme blessing of being married to one who unites, in her person, beauty, virtue, the graces, love and friendship.

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